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RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0314
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 1750
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1367
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 4336
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 2244
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2323
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 8564
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2478
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 0397
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 0318
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2860
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 000779

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DEPT FOR EUR/SCE AND IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/17/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [YI](#) [SR](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: KOSOVO: ITALIAN FM SUPPORTS AHTISAARI'S CORE
STATUS PROPOSALS, BUT INSISTS NON-STATUS ASPECTS SHOULD BE
STRENGTHENED

REF: A. A. SECSTATE 49723
[1](#)B. B. ROME 710
[1](#)C. C. ROME 702

ROME 00000779 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Ronald Spogli for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C/NF) I discussed the Ahtisaari plan for Kosovo with FM D'Alema in an April 5 meeting (ref B.) He assured me of Italy's firm support for the plan's core status provisions. However, he made it clear Italy felt work needed to be done to strengthen the non-status aspects of the plan such as the protection of religious sites and minority rights. If we need to persuade FM D'Alema to support ALL aspects of the Ahtisaari plan, I recommend a call from the Secretary to engage him personally.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) The absence of a clear public statement from FM D'Alema has created confusion about Italy's intentions on Kosovo. While the Italian MFA continues to insist that the Italian position is clear and "available" to the public, no public statements have been issued supporting the Ahtisaari proposal indicating Italy's support for supervised independence for Kosovo. I encouraged D'Alema to make a strong public statement in favor of the Ahtisaari proposal during our April 5 meeting and D'Alema agreed (ref B). D'Alema's COS Nelli Feroci told the DCM in an April 16 conversation that D'Alema hadn't forgotten his commitment, but that he just needed to find the right place to make the public statement. Nelli Feroci promised "we will find a place and do it." Post has also reached out to the political parties in the governing coalition on this topic. All interlocutors agree that D'Alema is the key to Italy's position on Kosovo. End. Summary.

MFA Insists its position is well known

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13. (C/NF) On April 5, FM D'Alema told me Italy fully supports the Ahtisaari plan's core status provisions for supervised independence for Kosovo and agreed to make a public statement to that effect. He also underscored that he felt some non-status aspects, like protection of religious sites and minority rights, needed to be strengthened. MFA Balkans Office Director Raimondo De Cardona assured poloff that the Italian position remains solidly in support of the UNOSEK proposal and remains fully in line with other Quint members.

14. (C/NF) The DCM called Ambassador Ferdinando Nelli Feroci, D'Alema's Chief of Staff, April 16 to remind him of D'Alema's commitment to make a public statement and to ask why he hadn't done so yet. Nelli Feroci said he remembered the commitment D'Alema had made to the Ambassador to issue a public statement in support of the Ahtisaari plan, but said they need to find the right place to do it. He said the FM was on his way to Algiers April 16 which would not be the right place for the Kosovo announcement, but he promised "we will find a place and do it."

PM's Office Pledges Support for Kosovar Independence
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15. (C/NF) On April 4, PM Prodi told me his office fully supports the UNOSEK proposals and believes that supervised independence for Kosovo is the only solution (REF C). He noted, however, that if there were any equivocation on Italy's policy, it was coming from the MFA.

Political Parties Ready to Accept Kosovo's Independence
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16. (C/NF) Luciano Vecchi, foreign policy advisor to D'Alema's DS party, insisted that the position of the FM and party leadership was firmly in support of supervised independence for Kosovo. He added that he would encourage D'Alema to make a public statement outlining his full support for the plan and appeared surprised that none had yet been made.

17. (C/NF) Luca Bader, foreign policy advisor of the Margherita party, noted that the party supported the work of Ahtisaari and recognized that his proposals were the only way forward. Bader noted with some frustration that D'Alema's decision making on foreign policy issues was a mystery to his party's leadership, and did not know whether the Margherita party could influence the FM to be more publicly supportive of the proposal.

18. (C/NF) Raffaello Matarazzo, political advisor to the head of the Chamber of Deputies Foreign Affairs Committee Umberto Ranieri (also a DS party member), told poloff that while the party recognized that the Ahtisaari plan was the only way forward on Kosovo, no political decision and no political instructions have been handed down from the party leadership. Matarazzo speculated that D'Alema was caught trying to placate the Russians without angering the US.

Comment

19. (C/NF) Support for the Ahtisaari plan is widespread within the Italian governing coalition all the way up to the PM; however FM D'Alema is clearly running the show on this one. I believe he was sincere in his support for the core status provisions in our April 5 conversation (ref B). D'Alema does not support all of the non-status aspects of the Ahtisaari plan as they currently stand. If we need his support on all aspects of the plan, I recommend a call from the Secretary to personally engage him. End Comment.
Spogli